

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a porous ceramic structure which comprises: mixing a ceramic material, a foamed resin and, if necessary, a forming auxiliary; forming the mixture into a formed body; and then firing the thus formed body, wherein:

as the foamed resin, there is used a material in which the weight of a gas included in the foamed resin stored at 40°C for 4 weeks is 8% or more of the weight of the foamed resin and in which a weight decrease ratio of the gas included in the foamed resin stored at 40°C for 4 weeks is 30% or less with respect to the weight of the gas before stored, and

a resin of an outer shell of the foamed resin is constituted of a copolymer containing 60 wt% or more of acrylonitrile and 40 wt% or less of methyl methacrylate.

13-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to ~~claim 15,~~claim 12, wherein the resin of the outer shell of the foamed resin is constituted of a copolymer containing 60 wt% or more of acrylonitrile and 20 wt% or less of methyl methacrylate.

18. (Currently Amended) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to ~~claim 14,~~claim 12, wherein the resin of the outer shell of the foamed resin is constituted of a copolymer containing 90 wt% or more of acrylonitrile and 10 wt% or less of methyl methacrylate.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein 80 wt% or more of the gas included in the foamed resin is a C5 component having 5 carbon atoms.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein the ceramic structure is a honeycomb structure.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein the ceramic structure is a honeycomb filter which has a plurality of through holes opened in an exhaust gas inflow-side end face and an exhaust gas outflow-side end face and in which the plurality of through holes are closed alternately in opposite end face portions.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein the ceramic structure is made of, as main components, cordierite, silicon carbide (SiC), and/or silicon carbide (SiC) and metallic silicon (Si).

27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein the average diameter of the foamed resin is in a range of 2 to 200 μm .

29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ceramic structure according to claim 12, wherein the thickness of a shell wall of the foamed resin is in a range of 0.01 to 1.0 μm .

31. (Canceled)